



Proud to be Slough

Slough's Sustainable
Community Strategy

What is a Sustainable Community Strategy?

A sustainable community is a place where people want to live and work. It is safe and inclusive, well planned and serviced and offers equality of opportunity to all citizens.

The purpose of a Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) is to create the positive Vision that will deliver that sustainable community. It is the product of comprehensive consultation with local stakeholders, members of the community and the voluntary sector. Workshops exploring the issues and themes contained within this strategy were held in late 2007. Local groups were given an opportunity to shape the Vision and identify our priorities.

Delivering the Sustainable Community Strategy

Slough Focus - the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP)

Slough Focus brings together the views of the public, private, voluntary and community sectors. It is responsible for directing resources and coordinating local activities to deliver the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS).

Local Area Agreement (LAA)

The LAA is the delivery plan for the SCS. It is split into five priority themes; Community Cohesion,

Health and Wellbeing, Community Safety, Environment, and Economy and Skills. Each theme contains a set of agreed targets to be met over the next three years. Activities to meet these targets will be managed and monitored by the LSP.

Local Development Framework (LDF)

The LDF is a collection of local development documents, prepared by the Council in consultation with partners and the public. The LDF will contain

key development goals for the local area, which will inform and deliver large parts of the SCS Vision.

Neighbourhood Working

Our developing approach to neighbourhood working will also enable local people to influence, and where appropriate, design and plan services in their local neighbourhood. Local area plans and neighbourhood charters will help ensure improved outcomes at a neighbourhood level.

Foreword

In 2007, partners from across Slough, came together to agree a fresh vision for Slough. This vision underpins our aspirations for the town over the next 20 years and is summed up in this, our Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS).

In this document, we set out what and where we want Slough to be in 20 years' time and how collectively, as agencies and organisations working together in partnership with local communities, we will provide the focus and leadership needed to steer us towards our long-term goals.

Slough today is characterized by both continuity and change. The town continues to be an economic hub with a strong culture of enterprise and entrepreneurship. It also continues to be a location of choice for so many communities, from all parts of the world.

At the same time, the town is competing in a social and economic environment that is radically different from the past. This has led to new challenges around community cohesion, environmental sustainability, healthy living and the need to maintain economic competitiveness in a globalised market.

This strategy sets out how we hope to meet these challenges and continue to maintain Slough's reputation as an excellent place to live, work, learn and play. It is a combination of numerous pieces of work and has been informed by working with communities and interested stakeholders within the town.

The issues and priorities contained within this strategy are the ones that matter most to you. However like all strategies, it should not be seen as fixed - it is part of a continuing process and the role of communities in shaping and delivering this strategy cannot be underestimated.

Whether this contribution comes in the shape of involvement in the Slough Strategic Partnership Forum, joining in the actions or projects of a Partnership Delivery Group or responding to a particular consultation - there is scope for everyone to be involved in bringing into reality the vision for Slough.

We look forward to your contribution.

Rob Anderson
Chair of Slough Focus



A Vision of Slough - 20 years from now

“People are proud to live in Slough where diversity is celebrated and where residents can enjoy fulfilling, prosperous and healthy lives”

Slough’s citizens will choose to live in Slough for its booming economy and jobs, its attractive homes, leisure facilities and thriving and diverse communities, as well as its high achieving schools and further and higher education opportunities.

More people who work locally will choose to live locally, attracted by Slough’s green spaces, restaurants and pleasant atmosphere.

The ‘Heart of Slough’ will be a hive of commerce, leisure, living and learning. By day, business men and women will be drawn to Slough’s range of high-tech businesses and its opportunities. By night, Slough’s bars and cafés will buzz with the voices of residents as they enjoy the relaxed, attractive and safe surroundings.

Slough will also attract new

worker-residents through a much larger supply of affordable and high-quality homes. More than just young professionals will be catered for. Slough will be a place where families live alongside young professionals, couples and the elderly in housing which is appropriate, affordable and accessible.

Slough will be a UK-wide renowned gateway to the world. Its proximity to London, two major international airports and Europe via the Channel Tunnel will attract businesses and workers from across the globe. It will also give Slough’s highly qualified residents the chance to compete in a global market.

The area’s booming local economy will continue to boost local productivity through inward investment and the creation of jobs. Slough’s productivity stands above all other areas in the

Thames Valley and this will continue to be the case over the next two decades. With the largest trading estate in Europe within its boundaries and its own highly skilled workforce, Slough will continue to set the standard in the Thames Valley for economic growth.

Slough will have high quality public services that support individuals, families and those that are vulnerable. The most deprived neighbourhoods will have been transformed, improving the quality of life for all residents and particularly our children and young people, older people and those who suffer the effects of poverty.

All of Slough’s residents will have access to high quality places of learning - for young people and adults alike. Every Slough resident will have the opportunity to be qualified to at least an A level or

equivalent standard. Through their improved levels of education, Slough’s citizens will be able to compete for local jobs, increase their disposable income and spend it locally in Slough’s improved leisure outlets and facilities.

Slough will be a place where public spaces are exactly that; owned by and enjoyed by the public. In the future, ‘our space’ to residents of Slough will refer to their pavements, roads, streets, parks and squares as well as their homes and gardens. Pride in place and locality will resonate throughout the residents of Slough and reverberate across the UK.

The town’s green spaces will be revitalised, well used and safe. All of Slough’s residents will have access to somewhere green where they can enjoy the great outdoors without needing to travel.

Slough will not be a place that depends on the car; the majority of residents will make use of its ample walk and cycle ways. Fewer cars, more bicycles and more walkers will mean healthier and happier residents, cleaner air and safer spaces for children to play in.

Residents will be encouraged to live healthy and active lifestyles, relieving the stress placed on healthcare services and making Slough one of the healthiest populations in the country. Healthcare will be person-centred and accessible to all.

Slough will be a place which is safe; residents will be happy to walk and cycle through the streets of Slough without fear of crime or persecution. More importantly, Slough will be seen as a place where people trust and get on well with each other. Where crime and social disorder does exist,

local services will be geared up to tackle the causes as well as the symptoms. This emphasis on preventative measures will bring greater happiness, fewer crimes and a reduced burden on the taxpayer.

Slough will be a place where the community is heard and listened to. Genuine and meaningful engagement with all of Slough’s residents will foster a greater sense of belonging, shared identity, and shared pride. Slough will continue to be a shining beacon of success through diversity; Slough’s residents will identify as much with Slough as with any other identity - ethnic, national or cultural.

Slough’s diverse residents will unite around the slogan ‘Proud to be Slough’ and everything that this stands for; strength through diversity, with opportunity and prosperity for all.



Community Cohesion

Celebrating diversity, enabling inclusion

Slough has always been an area that has welcomed new communities and now boasts an exceptionally diverse population estimated by Slough Borough Council to be in the region of 130,000.

Close to 40% of its residents come from a black or minority-ethnic background and the borough has a higher than national average number of young people and those of working age. Only 13% of residents are of pensionable age, compared with the national or regional averages of around 19%. However, research shows that the older people population is set to increase over the next decade with sharp increases in the number of people aged over 75 (2001 Census).

As of 2007, Slough was ranked at 115th most deprived locality in England. The 2001 census showed 6.5% of households in Slough have no access to central heating, while 23.2% of Slough residents have no access to a car or van.

These figures paint a simplistic view of a complex local picture.

There are large disparities between areas in the borough which rank among the most deprived 10% nationally and areas which appear amongst the 20% least deprived nationally (IMD 2007).

Slough has long enjoyed good relations amongst its various communities and we seek to build on this and ensure that the diversity which characterizes Slough is recognised and celebrated. Our goal is a town where all communities, irrespective of background, have a chance to succeed and prosper and where they have an equal stake in shaping the future direction of the town.



What local people have told us

- They want to live in a town that celebrates its diversity. There is a positive continuation of the trends seen in 2006; for example, over three quarters (82%) of respondents to the Annual Attitude Survey in 2008 agreed that people from different backgrounds can get along well in their local area.
- They want a strong civil society which promotes a feeling of public ownership of shared spaces and a sense of belonging to the community to bring people together.
- They want to live in a town that is inclusive and which provides access to services and support, particularly for the vulnerable, elderly, children and young people.

How are we going to get there?

- By improving relations among established and new communities and strengthening existing populations and cultures.
- By promoting involvement in community activities.
- By prioritising community cohesion considerations in all activities and services.
- By working together to strengthen our communities to resist all forms of extremism.

We can look forward to a town that

- Is vibrant and diverse and has communities that are ambitious and self-confident.
- Has reduced the social and economic disparities between and within communities.
- Has a strong civil society with a voluntary and community sector having the capacity to help improve the quality of life for residents.



Slough will

- 82% of residents will feel as though they are able to work collaboratively to sort out issues in their own areas by 2018
- Increase the percentage agreeing that Slough is an area where people from different backgrounds get on well by 10% by 2028
- 85% of respondents to the Annual Attitude Survey will be satisfied with Slough as a place to live by 2028

Adding years to life and life to years

The factors affecting the health of Slough's population are varied, including the impact of the urban environment, poor quality housing (both public and private sector), the presence of large industrial estates, traffic congestion and Slough's close links with Heathrow.

The demographics of the population are complex and challenging: the percentage of households in Slough with one or more persons living with a limiting long-term disability stands at 14% (2001 Census), a relatively high percentage when compared to regional peers. This issue was particularly acute amongst the working age population in the more deprived wards, such as Foxborough, Baylis and Stoke and Chalvey. Poor health is strongly related to poverty and according to the Berkshire East Primary Care Trust Annual Report approximately 5,800 children are living in low-income households in the borough.

Slough is home to a variety of different communities, each of whom brings unique health challenges. Circulatory diseases

(coronary heart disease and strokes) are the largest cause of death in Slough, closely followed by all cancers. Diabetes is a major health problem and is particularly common in the Asian communities. Life expectancy in Slough is slightly lower than the South East and the national average, and in 2003 life expectancy for the most deprived 20% of the town stood at 75 years, 4.5 years less than for people in the most affluent 20% of the town (Primary Care Trust Annual Report 2006/7).

We want Slough to have one of the healthiest communities in the country with the building blocks in place to support and encourage people to improve their health and lifestyle.



What local people have told us

- They want easy, affordable and fair access to quality health services that are user-focussed.
- That activities for the elderly and vulnerable should be promoted.
- They want greater mental health awareness.
- They want to be provided with high quality recreation facilities.

How are we going to get there?

- By intervening early to tackle serious health issues such as obesity and heart disease and promoting healthier lifestyles.
- By maintaining a person-centred approach to health service provision.
- By making health services are accessible to everyone.
- By investing in high quality, well maintained leisure facilities that are open to all.

- By providing support for vulnerable young people, and adults (including children in need of safeguarding and people with disabilities and learning disabilities).
- By providing effective and tailored services for vulnerable young people, and adults so as to allow them to live independent, socially inclusive and active lives.

We look forward to a Slough that

- Has communities that enjoy long and healthy lives in line with the regional average.
- Has more opportunities for local people to make positive lifestyle choices to improve their physical and mental health.
- Supports independent living, helping vulnerable and older residents to lead long and fulfilling lives.
- Delivers effective services which meet the emotional and physical needs of children and young people.



Slough will

- Reduce obesity amongst children by 1% by 2010*
- Reduce the rate of deaths across all age groups from all diseases in 2011 by 13%*
- Reduce the rate of deaths from circulatory diseases for people under 75 by 33% by 2011*

* from 2006 baseline

Community Safety

Being safe, feeling safe

Since 2004 crime has been coming down in Slough. Indeed, people's perception of crime in Slough is higher than the reality of it. Less than one in 10 (7%) of Slough's residents have experienced violence or a threat of violence and only 6% of the population have ever been a victim of car crime (Strategic Needs Assessment 2008). Today, only 5% of people feel unsafe in Slough in the daytime (compared with 12% in 2006) and 41% feel safe outside in Slough after dark (compared to 29% in 2006) (Annual Attitude Survey 2008).

Despite the progress made, crime continues to be the number one priority for local residents. The Slough Borough Annual Attitude Survey has revealed that residents see "Levels of Crime" as the most important aspect for making an area somewhere nice to live and the aspect that most needs improving. This is backed up by a 2006/2007 Satisfaction Survey which revealed that the number one priority for improvement for Slough residents was reducing the level of crime.



Like many other urban areas, Slough has significant drug problems, possibly worsened by its good transport links which make it an ideal transit route to the rest of the country. The number of people misusing drugs in Slough (14.5 per 1000) is above the national average. It is estimated that of the 1163 'problem drug users' (those using Class A drugs such as heroin and crack cocaine) in Slough, over 40% are not in treatment. Of those that do attend treatment, a much higher proportion successfully complete their treatment than is the case nationally (JSNA 2008).

In delivering this theme we want to create a town which is safe for residents to live, work and play. We want a town where local agencies work collaboratively to tackle crime and its underlying causes, and where there is a proactive approach to tackling crime with the emphasis on preventative and diversionary work.



What local people have told us

- Community safety is residents' biggest concern. From a list of options, respondents to the 2008 Annual Attitude Survey were most likely to say that, a low level of crime (64%) is most important in making somewhere a good place to live.
- 44% of respondents to the 2008 Annual Attitude Survey were concerned about the provision of activities for teenagers.
- They want investment of resources in education aimed at addressing drug and alcohol abuse.

How are we going to get there?

- We will continue tackling the root causes of crime by working with offenders and those who are vulnerable.
- We will continue our commitment to working in partnership through the Safer Slough Partnership, which works to address community safety issues, including anti-social behaviour, drug and alcohol misuse.
- By tackling burglary, vehicle crime and violent crime (including domestic violence and hate crime).
- By developing our services for young people.

- By and encouraging greater participation and volunteering among young people.
- By raising the profile and performance of local policing and community warden schemes to help reduce low level crime.
- By working with different communities and the police in order to build trust and understanding.
- By further improving the provision of treatment and support services for those who misuse drugs and alcohol.

We can look forward to a town

- With reduced levels of crime and fear of crime.
- With local services equipped to effectively tackle the occurrence and causes of crime and anti-social behaviour.
- With a supportive environment for victims of drug and alcohol abuse, including a strong rehabilitative culture.



Slough will

- Reduce perceptions of anti-social behaviour by 20% by 2028
- Achieve a 20% reduction in the number of problematic drug users and a 15% reduction in alcohol dependants by Improving accessibility to drug and alcohol treatment by 2028
- Achieve a 19% sustainable reduction in the level of crime in order to improve satisfaction with the area by 2028

A cleaner, greener place to live, work and play

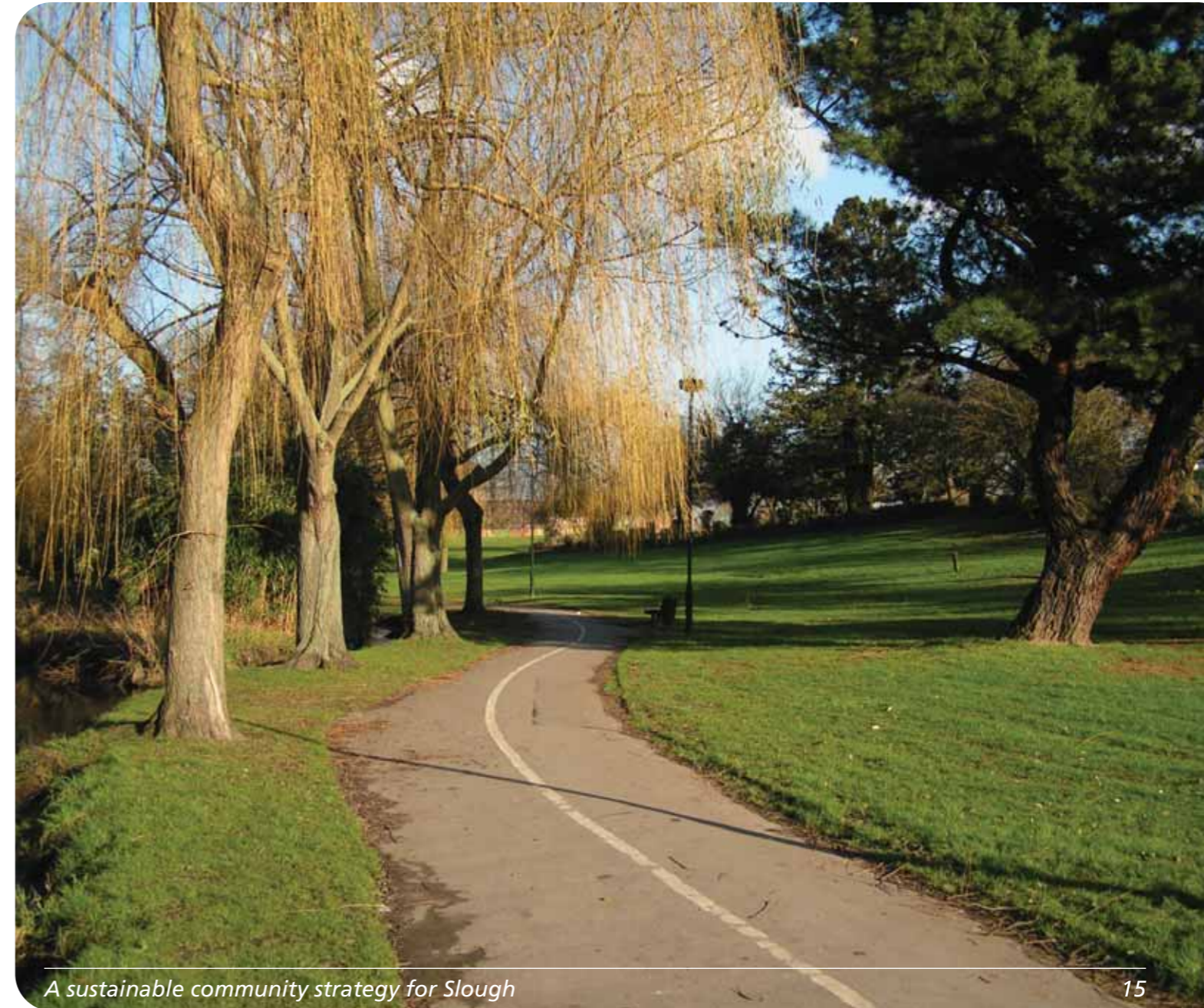
Slough has made good progress in recent years to improve the local environment and is now one of the cleanest boroughs in the South-East (GMB Survey 2008).

However, despite the progress made, the town suffers from poor air quality and traffic congestion whilst the standard of the built environment remains poor. Proximity to Heathrow as well as major motorways such as the M40, M25 and M4 aggravates problems especially in relation to air quality. In relation to Housing approximately 51% of social

housing fails to meet the government's 'decent homes standard' (Slough Borough Council Corporate Plan 2007/08) and 54% of vulnerable residents in the private sector live in non-decent homes. Slough also suffers from a lack of affordable and appropriate housing and residents' housing experiences differ across communities: for example Central (23.6%), Baylis and Stoke (22%) and Wexham Lea (20%) all featured prominently in the indicator related to overcrowded housing. In comparison only 10% of households in Cippenham

Green and 12% of households in Foxborough and Haymill suffered from overcrowding (Census, 2001).

We aim to have a town that is environmentally sustainable, where world-class infrastructure continues to facilitate economic success and where housing provision meets the needs of all residents. This means looking at how we live, how we travel and how we use our resources and energy to ensure a sustainable future and create an attractive local environment for Slough.



What local people have told us

- That the importance of public transport is increasing and that the use of public transport, such as bus (12%) or train (8%), to get to work has doubled since 2006 (6% and 3% respectively).
- They want a pleasant, clean and attractive local environment with good quality, congestion-free roads and accessible green spaces.
- They want an attractive and vibrant town centre and public spaces that are tidy and pleasant. People want to feel proud of Slough, the place they live, work and visit. Respondents to the 2008 Annual Attitude Survey were satisfied with Slough as a place to live (74%) and their neighbourhood as a place to live (82%). However, respondents were less likely to be satisfied with Slough High Street as a place to visit, as a quarter of respondents are dissatisfied (22%).

- With growing public awareness around the environment, many residents are looking for simple but effective ways to limit negative impact on the environment.

How are we going to get there?

- The high profile Heart of Slough project and the comprehensive re-development of the town centre will help create a vibrant restaurant quarter, new homes and office spaces, an iconic building housing the town library and a new bus station. The benefits of a vibrant town centre will be felt by all wards within the borough and help build strong local communities.
- By creating and maintaining attractive, clean and green public spaces that are accessible to all.
- By providing residents and businesses with information about environmental issues and getting individuals and organisations to act responsibly toward the environment giving

due regard to minimising waste, encouraging a culture of recycling and lowering CO2 emissions.

- By ensuring that our planning policies and activities are environmentally sensitive and sustainable and deliver improvements in air quality (by reducing the use of the car and by promoting alternative modes of transport).
- Initiatives such as Art @ the Centre and a focus on 'concentrating development' in the most sustainable location will help in the regeneration of the Town Centre, improve its image and allow it to become a regional transport and shopping hub.
- By increasing choices for home-seekers, offering sustainable housing options and having a resettlement service that supports clients to successfully maintain their tenancies and prevent the risk of homelessness, isolation and social exclusion.

- By ensuring homes are safe and meets the needs of individuals and families and which comply with the government's decent homes standard.
- By maximising the supply of affordable and appropriate housing for local people working with partners to bring back into use empty homes and negotiating robustly for acceptable affordable housing contributions on private sector developments.

We look forward to a cleaner, greener and more vibrant Slough that

- Enjoys an improved quality of public space.
- Has communities that are proud of their local environment and have a strong sense of public ownership.
- Is environmentally sustainable with a strong culture of recycling, energy efficiency and a sustainable transport system.
- Has a vibrant and rejuvenated town centre.



Slough will

- Recycle 60% of waste by 2028
- Have reduced its CO2 emission by 20% by 2028
- Have all public transport and council vehicles running on cleaner fuel by 2028

Economy and Skills

Prosperity for all

Slough's economy is buoyant: a recent economic assessment by Local Futures reports that the economy of Slough contributes close to £7.5 billion to the national GDP and up to £700 million of manufacturing output, making Slough the third most productive town outside of London.

Figures from the Office for National Statistics reveals that Slough continues to see an increase in VAT registered businesses (3,280) and self-employment has grown by 56% over the last 6 years, which represents 8.4% of the working population.

However behind this success lies a more complex, mixed picture.

Unemployment rates currently stand at 5% for males and 7% for females. Elementary occupations (i.e. occupations requiring minimal or no skills) grew from 12.2% in February 2002 to 16.8% by September 2006. The number of claimants of incapacity benefit at the end of 2006 was 6.1% compared to the regional average of 4.7%. The gross weekly pay of residents in Slough increased from £380.40 in 2002 to £459.90 by 2007, although this is still markedly below the South East average of £499.60 and substantially lower than the

average salary for jobs in Slough which stands at £564.60.

Published data also shows that 28.11% of 16-74 year olds have no qualifications at all while 19.68% have a first degree or equivalent compared to 23.92% and 21.75% for the South East respectively. The number of entrants entering university is increasing, growing by 35% between 1999/00 and 2005/06. This compares favourably against both the regional average (17%) and the national figure of 18%.

Despite Slough being a relatively compact geographical area, there are contrasting economic fortunes between certain communities. For instance, wards such as Chalvey and Central have a relatively high number of Job Seeker Allowance (JSA) claimants compared with Baylis and Stoke. In terms of individuals in receipt of at least one form of DWP benefit, the wards of Baylis and Stoke, Britwell and Central feature most prominently.

When in employment, the types of jobs engaged in by local residents

also differ greatly. For example, far fewer residents living in Baylis and Stoke (28%) and Britwell (29%) were in professional occupations, compared to residents in Upton (50%) and Cippenham Meadows (45%). 13% of residents in Langley St Mary's and 14% of residents in Upton were in semi-skilled or unskilled occupations, compared to 30% of residents in Baylis and Stoke and 28% of residents in Central.

We aim to create a sustainable economy which fulfils the aspirations and potential of local people, businesses and other partners. This includes equipping our residents with the necessary skills to allow them to compete in the new knowledge economy whilst also retaining the right 'mix' of jobs to meet the needs of our different communities.

We will create the right environment for businesses to flourish and for all sections of our community irrespective of background or personal circumstance to realize their full potential.



What local people have told us

- They want to see full employment for local people.
- They want jobs that are accessible to the diverse local population.
- They want local skills and training centres developed to address the skills gap in Slough.
- They want the council, local businesses and other partners to support the further development of a local workforce.



How are we going to get there?

- By increasing the number of young people in education, employment or training by working closely with our partners to provide young people with the support they need to help them achieve.
- By bringing together businesses, training providers and representatives of the community to provide a suitable approach to training

that meets the needs of local employers and the local community.

- By reaching out to disadvantaged and socially excluded groups so that everyone has equal and fair access to education, employment and training.
- By providing appropriate services such as effective childcare so that everyone has equal and fair access to education, employment and training.

- By ensuring that our schools remain an important focal point for the community. Close working with schools will help ensure that they remain key enablers in helping children and young people enjoy and achieve.

We can look forward to a Slough that

- Sustains its economic competitiveness and retains its position as an economic hub of the South East.
- Increases and supports enterprise including business start-ups, VAT registered businesses and self-employment.
- Enjoys equality of opportunity and improved economic activity rates for women, people with disabilities and members from minority communities.
- Has incomes of local residents that are at the same level as wages of local jobs.



Slough will

- Reduce the achievement gap between children who receive free-school meals and those that don't at ages 11 and 14 by more than 2% over the next three years
- Increase economic activity rates to 85% by 2016
- Have 95% of working-age adults with basic skills in both functional literacy and numeracy by 2020

What happens next?

Slough Focus will monitor the progress of the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) every year to make sure we are on track and are continuing to meet the needs of local people.

To facilitate good partnership working and help in the delivery of the SCS, this strategy is supported by a portfolio of documents which detail arrangements for performance management, community engagement and action planning linked to the SCS.

For queries relating to these documents, or any other aspect of Slough Focus, please contact:

Naveed Mohammed, LSP
Partnership Manager,
c/o Slough Borough Council,
St Martins Place, Slough, SL1 3UF
Tel: 01753 875657

Email the Partnership at:
lsp@slough.gov.uk

Look on the Internet at:
www.slough.gov.uk/mycouncil



Acknowledgements

This document has been compiled from a variety of sources, including:-

- Slough Story, 2007 (Slough Policy and Performance Unit)
- UK Statistics Authority, www.statistics.gov.uk
- 2001 national census, www.ons.gov.uk/census/index.html
- Berkshire East Primary Care Trust Annual Report 2006/7, www.berkshireeast-pct.nhs.uk/annual-reports/berks-east/index.htm
- Annual Attitude Survey 2008 (QA Research)
A consultation exercise covering a range of topics. It follows on from the 2004 and 2006 Annual Surveys. In total 1575 face to face interviews were completed with residents from across the local authority area.
- Strategic Needs Assessment 2008 (Safer Slough Partnership, Slough Borough Council)
- Final Report Best Value General Survey Results 2006 for Slough Borough, 2007 (QA Research)
- Local Futures, www.localfutures.com
- Slough Community Network, Make Sure You're Heard, November 2007
- Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2007, <http://www.communities.gov.uk/communities/neighbourhoodrenewal/deprivation/deprivation07/>
- Corporate Plan 2007/08 (Slough Borough Council)
- GMB Survey 2008, www.gmb.org.uk
- Slough Local Development Framework - Core Strategy 2006-2026 (Planning Policy and Projects, Slough Borough Council)
- Slough Children and Young People's Plan 2008-2011, (Education and Children's Services, Slough Borough Council)
- Slough Housing Strategy 2005-2010 (Green and Built Environment, Slough Borough Council)
- Slough Homelessness Strategy 2008-2011 (Green and Built Environment, Slough Borough Council)



proud to be
Slough

Slough Focus
Local Strategic Partnership

CO/5385/01-09-08

